

WHAT EMPLOYERS SHOULD KNOW WHEN WORKING WITH TRIBES

Office of Child Support Enforcement
Administration for Children and Families
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Child Support Employer Outreach

There are more than 560 federally recognized American Indian/Alaska Native tribes in the U.S. According to the 2000 census, more than 30 percent of all Native American children under the age of 18 live with one parent.

Do tribes have their own child support programs?

Forty-seven tribes operate federally funded child support programs with 11 more in the development stage. We call these tribal child support agencies (sometimes called “IV-D” agencies). “IV-D” refers to the section of the Social Security Act that authorized federal funding for the child support program in 1975.

Do tribes have their own laws?

Yes. Tribes are sovereign nations and have their own governments with the authority to make and enforce laws, to adjudicate civil and criminal disputes, and to tax and license. A tribal child support agency has similar enforcement authority as a state child support agency and should be responded to accordingly.

Do tribal child support agencies use the OMB-approved Income Withholding for Support (IWO) form?

Yes. Tribal child support agencies are required to use the Income Withholding for Support form (often called an Income Withholding Order or IWO) approved by OMB.

Must I honor an IWO from a tribe if I am not a tribal employer or located on tribal land?

Yes. You are required to honor an IWO from a tribal child support agency just as you would honor one from a state child support agency.

Where should I send payments for an IWO that comes from a tribe?

Send payments to the address indicated on the IWO. This may be the tribe’s accounting office, the tribal court, or it may be the tribal child support agency.

Must I honor a request for verification of employment (VOE) from a tribe if I am not a tribal employer or located on tribal land?

Yes. Please complete all VOEs sent by a state or tribal child support agency.

If a noncustodial parent/employee leaves my employment, where should I send the notification of termination?

Send the notice of termination to the address on the IWO.

Should I expect to receive a National Medical Support Notice (NMSN) from a tribe?

Probably not. Although a tribe can use the NMSN to seek health coverage for a child, tribes are not required to seek health insurance for tribal children.

Questions? Contact Paige Hausburg, Tribal Coordinator, federal Office of Child Support Enforcement at paige.hausburg@acf.hhs.gov or 202-401-5635. Thank you for helping tribal children!

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